

**60percent – 6 October 2023**

### **Women in Africa Prefer Long-Acting PrEP Over Pills**

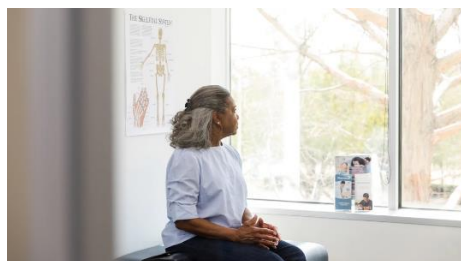


*Poz* | 27 September 2023

A majority of women in the HPTN 084 trial, which compared injectable cabotegravir versus daily oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), chose the long-acting option, according to study findings presented at the International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Science (IAS 2023). “These results suggest that long-acting PrEP could have a huge prevention impact in Africa, where uptake of daily oral PrEP has been disappointingly low,” IAS president Sharon Lewin, MD, of the University of Melbourne, said in a news release. “I hope these findings will accelerate momentum to make long-acting PrEP accessible to all those who need it.”

<https://www.poz.com/article/women-africa-prefer-longacting-prep-pills>

### **It’s Way Too Hard for Black Women With HIV/AIDS to Get the Pain Relief They Need**



*Vice Us* | 28 September 2023

Esther Ross was diagnosed with AIDS in 1993. At the time, she was living in New York and had a multitude of physical symptoms and poorly-managed mental illness symptoms that contributed to her overall ill health. She credits a determined social worker with helping her address her physical and mental health and for gaining the education she needed in order to help herself and others. She now lives in North Carolina and advocates for others who are HIV positive. Thanks to newer medications, Ross is now undetectable for the AIDS virus and the symptoms she experienced when she was diagnosed have vanished, but she has constant pain.

<https://www.vice.com/en/article/z3mwv8/black-women-hiv-aids-pain>

### **People with HIV offered hope of self-injected drug at home**

*The Guardian* | 28 September 2023



One of the world’s largest commercial developers of HIV drugs is working on a treatment that can be injected by patients at home every two to three months by the end of the decade, saving them frequent visits to the clinic.

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/sep/28/hiv-drug-self-injected-home-treatment-gsk-viiv-healthcare-cabotegravir>

#### **WHAT IS ENDOMETRIOSIS? WHY IS IT SO HARD TO DIAGNOSE AND TREAT?**



*Health-e News | 28 September 2023*

Arnetia Brown got her first period when she was 13 and pain has been a regular part of her life since. “With my very first cycle my father found me passed out on the floor. I actually fainted because I was in so much pain,” she recalls. It would be another two years before the 28-year-old would consult a gynaecologist and start the long journey of trying to figure out what was going on. It was only six years later, at the age of 21, that Brown got the final diagnosis.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/09/28/what-is-endometriosis-why-is-it-so-hard-to-diagnose-and-treat/>

**New organic sanitary pads can lower the risk of cervical cancer**



*IOL | 28 September 2023*

After breast cancer, cervical cancer is the second most frequent malignancy in women in South Africa. Cervical cancer is a lifelong risk for 1 in every 42 women, according to the Cancer Association of South Africa (Cansa). The uterus, a hollow, pear-shaped structure where a foetus can develop, has a lower, narrow end called the cervix. From the uterus, the cervix extends downward to the vagina (birth canal).

<https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/lifestyle/new-organic-sanitary-pads-can-lower-the-risk-of-cervical-cancer-31078b5c-9d4e-492d-8aae-9293ba8021b6>

**“World AIDS Day 35: Remember and Commit”**



*Poz | 29 September 2023*

Every year on December 1st, the world unites to commemorate World AIDS Day. This annual event serves as a reminder of the global struggle to end HIV-related stigma, an opportunity to honor those we have lost, and a rallying cry to continue working toward a day when HIV is no longer a public health threat. In 2023, we mark the 35th commemoration of this important day with the theme “World AIDS Day 35: Remember and Commit.” The first World AIDS Day took place in 1988, providing a platform to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and honor the lives affected by the epidemic.

<https://www.poz.com/blog/world-aids-day-35-remember-commit>

**PREGNANT WOMEN IN MORETELE GO MONTHS WITHOUT ULTRASOUND SCANS**



*Health-e News | 29 September 2023*

It's been three months since expectant mothers in Seutelong in Moretele, North West province have been able to get an ultrasound scan at Sediane clinic. Patients say they have repeatedly been told that the doctor is not available. The clinic relies on a portable ultrasound machine which the doctor brings along when making rounds at the clinic. Ultrasound scan is used during pregnancy to check the baby's development. Without this machine the mothers are faced with a dilemma of having to go pay for the services at private institutions.

<https://health-e.org.za/2023/09/29/pregnant-women-in-moretele-go-months-without-ultrasound-scans/>

### **South Africa to introduce vaginal rings to fight HIV scourge**



*Punch* | 29 September 2023

Three key organisations involved in preventing and responding to HIV in South Africa – AIDS Foundation of South Africa, Beyond Zero, and Networking HIV & AIDS Community of Southern Africa – have placed an initial order of 16,000 Dapivirine Vaginal Rings for HIV prevention with the support of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The Global Fund disclosed this on Friday, in a press statement issued. The pre-exposure prophylaxis ring is a silicone ring that is inserted in the vagina every month and delivers long-acting, topical, and localized HIV prevention.

<https://punchng.com/south-africa-to-introduce-vaginal-rings-to-fight-hiv-scurge/>

### **Sterilised without my consent - tales of HIV positive women**



*Nation* | 29 September 2023

"I first learned that I was living with HIV when I was four months pregnant. It was difficult to process my status but my focus quickly shifted towards preventing my unborn child from contracting the virus," she reminisces. Being a woman with Grade Three literacy level, Leah placed her trust in healthcare professionals at Baba Dogo Hospital to ensure her child would be healthy.

<https://nation.africa/kenya/news/gender/sterilised-without-my-consent-tales-of-hiv-positive-women-4383314>

### **Exogenous hormone use not associated with increased breast cancer risk**



*Contemporary OB/GYN | 29 September 2023*

Exogenous hormone use is not significantly associated with increased breast cancer risk, according to a presentation at The Menopause Society 2023 Annual Meeting. There is a prevalent concern that exogenous hormone exposure increases breast cancer risk in women, as estrogen promotes mammary cancer development in animal studies. Serum estradiol levels have also been significantly associated with estrogen receptor-positive breast cancer. Breast cancer may also be impacted by the timing of exposure. A protective differentiation of breast tissue occurs during the first full-term pregnancy.

<https://www.contemporaryobgyn.net/view/exogenous-hormone-use-not-associated-with-increased-breast-cancer-risk>

**Perception about human papillomavirus vaccination among middle adolescent school girls in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 2023: qualitative study**



*BMC Women's Health | 30 September 2023*

*Abel Wubu, Bargude Balta, Amsale Cherie & Ketema Bizuwork*

Human papillomavirus vaccine uptake among school girls in Ethiopia was still low and uptake was majorly related to perception regarding the vaccine. This study explored school girls' perceptions of Human papillomavirus vaccination in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

<https://bmcwomenshealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12905-023-02660-1>

**Efficacy, safety, tolerability, and pharmacokinetics of long-acting injectable cabotegravir for HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis in transgender women: a secondary analysis of the HPTN 083 trial**

**THE LANCET**  
**HIV**

*The Lancet HIV | 29 September 2023*

*Prof Mark A Marzinke, Brett Hanscom, Zhe Wang, Prof Steven A Safren, Christina Psaros, et al.*

The HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN) 083 trial showed that long-acting injectable cabotegravir was more effective than tenofovir disoproxil fumarate plus emtricitabine in preventing HIV in cisgender men and transgender women who have sex with men. We aimed to characterise the cohort of transgender women included in HPTN 083.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanhiv/article/PIIS2352-3018\(23\)00200-X/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanhiv/article/PIIS2352-3018(23)00200-X/fulltext)

### **Breast Cancer Awareness Month: 1 in 27 SA women are affected by breast cancer**



*IOL | 2 October 2023*

In South Africa, the battle against breast cancer has reached alarming levels, affecting 1 in 27 women and accounting for 23% of all diagnosed cancers in 2019, as revealed by the National Health Institute report. The need for awareness and early detection has never been more vital. With Breast Cancer Awareness Month upon us, the Breast Imaging Society of South Africa (BISSA) steps forward as a guiding light, urging women to prioritise self-examinations and annual mammograms starting at the age of 40 or even earlier.

<https://www.iol.co.za/sunday-tribune/lifestyle/breast-cancer-awareness-month-1-in-27-sa-women-are-affected-by-breast-cancer-2e730041-5c6f-4ba3-a131-b1592a8fc70c>

### **In a first, CDC to recommend antibiotic pill after sex for some to prevent sexually transmitted infections**



*CBS News | 2 October 2023*

Doctors should weigh prescribing some of their patients a pill of a powerful antibiotic, doxycycline, to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted infections, according to new draft recommendations released Monday by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Officials say the approach, dubbed doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis, or Doxy-PEP for short, could mark a turning point in the nation's fight against the ongoing epidemic of sexually transmitted infections, or STIs.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/cdc-antibiotic-pill-after-sex-prevent-stds/>

### **Greater weight gain in first year of HIV treatment raises risks of diabetes, metabolic syndrome and precursors of heart disease**

*Aidsmap | 2 October 2023*





Greater weight gain and changes in body composition in the first year after starting antiretroviral treatment were associated with an increased risk of developing diabetes and metabolic syndrome over nine years of follow-up among participants in several large clinical trials, study investigators report in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/oct-2023/greater-weight-gain-first-year-hiv-treatment-raises-risks-diabetes-metabolic-syndrome>

### **Prevalence of Hypothyroidism in Pregnancy and Its Associations with Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes Among Pregnant Women in A General Hospital: A Cross Sectional Study**



*Dovepress* | 3 October 2023

*Abadi KK, Jama AH, Legesse AY and Gebremichael AK*

Globally, next to diabetes, thyroid disorders are the most common endocrine disorder and are relevant to public health. Hypothyroidism is a prevalent thyroid disorder during pregnancy, affecting approximately 3–5% of pregnant women. However, the prevalence can vary based on factors such as diagnostic criteria, maternal iodine status and pregnancy stage. Pregnancy-related hypothyroidism has been associated with various negative outcomes for both the mother and the newborn. These include an increased risk of spontaneous abortion, anemia, pre-eclampsia, gestational hypertension and placental abruption.

<https://www.dovepress.com/prevalence-of-hypothyroidism-in-pregnancy-and-its-associations-with-ad-peer-reviewed-fulltext-article-IJWH>

### **Health Beat #12 | How to cope with taking HIV meds for life**



*Bhekisisa* | 3 October 2023

HIV infects CD4 white blood cells. Our brains have such cells too. When HIV gets to someone's brain it causes inflammation and may lead to confusion. But antiretroviral drugs (ARVs) can change that.

The pills stop HIV from making copies of itself, so it reduces the amount of virus in someone's body — mostly to such low levels that it becomes scientifically impossible to infect others. ARVs, however, have to be taken for the rest of an infected person's life, and that often leads to anxiety and depression. That's why South Africa's HIV plan says nurses should be allowed to prescribe antidepressants (and not just doctors) so that it becomes easier to get. In this Health Beat episode, we visit Yvette Raphael, who has been taking ARVs for 23 years. We also speak to a psychiatrist, counsellor and HIV doctor to find out what's the best way to cope with difficulties that come with having to take meds for the rest of your life.

<https://bhekisisa.org/bhekisisa-tv/2023-10-03-health-beat-12-how-to-cope-with-taking-hiv-meds-for-life/>

### Spotlight on Sight and Life: Nourishing Minds for a Brighter Future



*PMNCH | 3 October 2023*

The Global Forum for Adolescents is almost here! As the largest-ever global gathering on adolescent health and well-being approaches, I am proud to spotlight PMNCH partners whose mission aligns with the five domains of adolescent well-being. This month, I am thrilled to recognize Sight and Life for their commitment to Domain 4: Learning, competence, education, skills, and employability.

<https://pmnch.who.int/news-and-events/news/item/03-10-2023-spotlight-on-sight-and-life-nourishing-minds-for-a-brighter-future>

### Towards Universal Health Coverage, Strengthening Primary Health Care: A whole of Government, whole of Society approach conference





The South African National Department of Health, the Department of Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, the World Health Organization and Health Systems Trust cordially invites you to participate in a Primary Health Care (PHC) themed, **Towards Universal Health Coverage, Strengthening Primary Health Care: A whole of Government, whole of Society approach**, conference to be held at the East London International Conference Centre from 14-17 November 2023.

The goals of the conference are to reinvigorate South Africa's commitment to the PHC approach as a strategic component of comprehensive health services in a unified health system, within a National Health Insurance (NHI) dispensation and to re-commit the country (i.e. government, citizens and social partners) to the PHC principles as being central to health promotion, disease prevention, and building a people-centred and resilient health system that is able to adapt and respond to emerging health challenges in a rapidly changing world.

For more information do go to the [conference web page](#).

<https://www.hst.org.za/media/Pages/PHC-Conference.aspx>

**The Public Health Association of South Africa (PHASA) – calling all public health champions!**



**PHASA**

PHASA is a voluntary organisation of individuals passionate about population health improvements and the reduction of health inequities, and whose work focuses on the prevention of disease, the promotion of health, and the improved functioning of the country's health care system. Are you passionate about improving the health and wellbeing of communities? Do you want to expand your professional network and stay current in the field of public health? Do you want to be part of the movement to improve Public Health? Then join the Public Health Association of South Africa today to make a difference and enhance your career!

As a member, you will:

- Gain access to cutting-edge research, resources, and best practices
- Connect with public health professionals from around the world
- Participate in educational events and conferences
- Contribute to shaping the future of public health
- Have access to mentors in the field
- Be at the forefront of advocacy initiatives.

To become a member, simply visit our [website](#) and complete the membership application. Don't miss this opportunity to advance your career and improve public health.

<https://phasa.org.za/index.php/get-involved/membership>

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The Health Systems Trust (HST) produces a weekly bulletin on Fridays focusing on key public health news, peer-reviewed journal articles and other important primary healthcare resources.

<https://www.hst.org.za/Pages/Subscription.aspx>